DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 302 346 RC 016 679

AUTHOR McIntosh, Billie Jane
TITLE Unemployed Native Americans in a Work Orientation Program in Phoenix.
PUB DATE 24 Apr 86
NOTE 46p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Alcoholism; *American Indian Culture; *Cross Cultural Training; Drug Abuse; Job Skills; *Job Training; Postsecondary Education; Reservation American Indians; *Unemployment; Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS Arizona (Phoenix); *Job Training Partnership Act 1982; *Phoenix Indian Center AZ

ABSTRACT

The unemployment rate for Native Americans is 49% nationwide and 54% in Arizona. The Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA) program at the Phoenix Indian Center trains Native American adults to enter the urban work force. The Center offers work orientation programs, individual counseling, and work experience programs. The majority of the participants are from reservations and have come to the city to find employment. Cultural differences make acceptance into the work force difficult: (1) Native Americans are typically quiet and lack assertiveness; (2) they show respect by averting their eyes when communicating with others; (3) they are not bound by the same time constraints as Anglos; and (4) they are not motivated by the acquisition of material goods. Many Native Americans drink and use marijuana or peyote, possibly a sign of their social discontent. The paper suggests that programs such as the one described hold the key to the unemployment problem. She recommends that Native Americans run these programs and that such programs teach participants to function in a bicultural society. (KS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED302346

UNEMPLOYED NATIVE AMERICANS IN A WORK ORIENTATION PROGRAM IN PHOENIX

Presented to

Dr. David L. Altheide, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Justice Studies

Qualitative Research

CRJ 521

Arizona State University

Tempe, Arizona

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

BILLIE JANE McINTOSH

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Submitted by

Billie Jane McIntosh

April 24, 1986

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

RC 016679

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	1
PHOENIX INDIAN CENTER	2
Environment	2
Activities	3
PERSPECTIVES	5
World of Work Orientation	5
Perspectives from the Helpers	13
An Employer's Views	18
Home Interview with a Participant	19
CONCEPTS	24
The Work Ethic	24
Quiet Versus Aggressive	26
Native American Authority	26
Deviance and Reality	28
ENDNOTES	30
BIBLIOGRAPHY	34
APPENDIX	35

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

My interest in doing this study came about in four stages. First, my concern for the social tragedy of the Native American population--suicides, alcoholism, family disintegration--has been influential most of my life.[1] Second, my theory that the work, or career, in which one engages is a source of identity as well as a stabilizing force in one's life.[2] Third, as a community college counselor, I have been concerned about the small percentage of Native American students who complete their degree programs. Fourth, recent research for another study revealed the unbelievable unemployment rate of Native Americans: 49 percent nationwide, 54 percent in Arizona (see Appendix). In addition, I question the suggestion made by some social scientists that Native American unemployment is a cultural decision and not a source of discontent among them. I would like to know: Is there a relationship between work status and social discontent among Native Americans?

Following the ideas about "grounded theory," promoted in Naturalistic Inquiry, I have made a concerted attempt to be open to whatever theory might emerge from the data, to be "open to the multiple realities encountered," and to be "responsible to contextual values."[3]

PHOENIX INDIAN CENTER

After some preliminary investigation to find a suitable source for gathering data about unemployed Native Americans, I decided to study participants of the JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) program at the Phoenix Indian Center. To gain entrance, I used the guidelines as described in Ethnography: Principles in Practice by Hammersley and Atkinson. My "gatekeeper" was the instructor of the World of Work orientation program.[4]

Environment

In the gradually deteriorating and urban renewal section, two miles north of downtown Phoenix, the Phoenix Indian Center accommodates six units: Children and Family Services, Aging and Behavioral Services, Legal Aid, Senior Citizens, Youth Activities, and Training and Employment Services. Phoenix Indian Center also publishes a monthly newspaper, Eagle Free Press. All of this is crowded into two small buildings with a small parking lot between.

One enters the Employment and Training Service through a tiny entry space created by the folding screens that hide the office copier from the rest of the room. The receptionist faces out from the opposite side of the small

room. In the center of the room, two plastic couches surround a coffee table covered by newspapers and employment market notebooks. A coffee maker is on the small table against the wall, with a sign posted that asks users to donate 25 cents per cup of coffee. On one wall, two doors lead to counselors' offices and one door leads to the training room; on the other side of the room, two doors lead to job developers' offices, and a hallway alongside the receptionist desk leads back to four other doors. Every conceivable space is covered by announcements, advertisements, slogans, etc.

Entering the training room door, one discovers this is another crowded room, with room dividers separating the secretary's cubbyhole, the supervisor's office, the trainer's office, and the classroom. Two restrooms and a supply room are at the other end of the room. While the room dividers offer some sense of privacy, even a whispered conversation can be heard throughout the room. The small classroom area holds three tables placed in a U shape, so the twelve chairs form a semicircle facing a chalkboard.

Activities

Following the four observation periods in the class setting, I made appointments for interview sessions with some of the key "helpers" in the Training and Employment Unit. I also talked to some of the JTPA participants, at

coffee breaks and at lunchtime.[5] I was able to talk to one of the participants in her apartment, but was unable to find the other participants at home at the time of our planned interviews.[6] I interviewed one employer of the Phoenix Indian Center referrals.

PERSPECTIVES

Observing the participants in the classroom and listening to their discussions with the instructor was one way I gathered data. Another way was to interview helpers, participants, and an employer.

World of Work Orientation

"How do people see you?" asked the instructor, whom I shall call Liz,[7] as she pointed to the question that had been written on the chalkboard earlier. The morning session topic was "Personality Assessment," and the participants had already completed a paper-and-pencil personality inventory sheet. The instructor was certainly not the stereotypical stoic Native American, but the opposite. She enthusiastically and dramatically highlighted her lecture with stories of life on her home reservation: the Navajo Nation. She displayed teaching skill: use of chalkboard, acknowledgement of students' remarks, role-playing the characters in her stories about people winning and losing in life. With long, straight black hair swaying, large eyes and expressive mouth working, and fashionably attired body, she commanded the full attention of her audience. The grace with which she moved about before the chalkboard was given credence when

she later revealed that she had had training in dance and had taught dance to preschoolers on the Navajo reservation at one time. She said she considered it very important that the children learn early in life to express themselves and to be proud of their bodies. She had even hitchhiked between Navajo villages to teach these children's classes. The attentiveness of the student-participants must be somewhat attributable to the personality of this dynamic instructor, on whom their eyes were glued throughout most of her lectures.

"How do people see you?" she repeated and looked for answers.

A tall, slender young Pima man with a heavy shock of cropped-off black hair was the first to answer.

"Courageous." He spoke softly, and repeated the word slowly. "I've been told I have courage--to come here, and to keep on trying to find a job."

Liz wrote the word courageous on the board. Then she asked her question again, "How do people see you?" and looked around the room.

After a slight pause, a curvaceous young Papago woman raised her soft, but alert round eyes to her instructor and asked a question: "What does courageous mean?"

The instructor began to talk about synonyms for the word courageous. She asked the students for other words, and slowly a few words and phrases were suggested. The

instructor talked about "narrow thinking" and "the Indian way of stretching one's horizons."

"How do people see you?" she asked again, like any teacher probing students into a personal assessment of their personalities.

"Quiet," said a tall, young Apache man, who wore a new-looking cotton plaid shirt, new jeans, and a bandana tied, Geronimo-fashion, around his shoulder-length, shiny black hair. While the voice came from him, his eyes remained on the work sheet in front of him, held in his hand and on which he had been jotting notes throughout the morning session. He sat at the far right side of the table arrangement, not speaking or looking at anyone all morning.

I guessed him to be quite young, bravely displaying his identity; and wondered if he knew the consequences of an appearance so deviant from the urban mixture of people.

"Is that how you want others to see you--as a quiet person?" asked Liz, the instructor. "Is quietness a positive or a negative?" There was no answer from the Apache, who continued to stare down at his work sheet. It was very quiet in the room. Liz repeated the question, but to the whole room.

"Negative," spoke the Pima. "I used to be that way, but it's not what people want you to be."

"What do people think about you when you're quiet?" asked Liz.

"Sometimes they think you don't like them," offered the Pima man.

"They think you're stuck up," said the pretty young Papago woman.

It was suggested by someone that it might be OK to be quiet sometimes. The instructor talked about individual differences--how some people are quieter than other people. She said that quietness was neither negative nor positive, but it would depend on the situation. She did not mention that quietness might be a "natural Indian trait," and I wondered about her strategy.

"What else do people see in you?" continued the instructor.

"Respect--that you respect people," spoke up the older man: a wiry, bespectacled Navajo whose western-style clothing, down to the cowboy boots, suggested he was fresh from the reservation.

After a short discussion of the meaning of respect--"appreciating others," "doing the right things, like getting respect from others"--the instructor began a lecture about how one gains respect, emphasizing the need to be aware of how we represent where we came from (see Appendix).

"But what if there's a lot of drinking in your community? Maybe you don't want to represent them," said the Papago woman.

"All tribes have their good and their naughty people," answered the instructor. "It's sometimes very confusing to know how to treat people." She talked about reasons for the drinking problem: economics, inability to adjust to changing ways, etc. "But we must take the best of both worlds," she cautioned, as she began to draw the picture of a stalk of corn with roots on the chalkboard (see Appendix). "A person needs to know who they are," she stated. "High self-esteem comes from having deep roots." She talked about each one's responsibility for learning who he or she is, and not blaming family members, who have problems of their own.

On another morning, the topic was "decision making." Liz asked the class: "What's hard about making a decision?"

"Too many choices. There are usually so many, you can't make any choice," said the Pima man.

Then Liz asked each one to tell about one decision he or she had already made today. There was a male/female split in types of responses. The response from each of the men was, in one way or another, "deciding whether to come to class or not." But the women offered a variety of responses: "deciding what to wear," "deciding what to eat for breakfast," "deciding which route to travel to get here," etc. It could have been there were more options open to the men; or it could be that social-gender rules were holding sway.

The instructor proceeded to draw out the students with her discussion of various aspects of decision making: the usefulness of making a decision, even if it turns out wrong; learning from mistakes, etc. She emphasized that it was important to have a positive approach to life, regardless. She talked about how experiences in our past can interfere with today's decisions, and gave some personal examples to illustrate her point.

Interspersed with the students' completion of an inventory of their decision-making skills, Liz discussed the work and gave minilectures. She talked of the importance of today's actions; how we shouldn't carry grudges, like resenting family members for having disappointed us. She gave the example of drunken relatives who have embarrassed us. We shouldn't let past actions interfere with what we need to do today.

"Sometimes we let carryovers from the past--like once belonging to a teen-age gang and getting tatooed--interfere with our dressing for a new job; and letting this be an embarrassment today. In Navajo manner, we say, 'He's someway,'" she added, and received smiles and snickers.

"Some of you said you had to make a decision to come to class today. What made you decide to come?" she asked.

"There wasn't anything better to do," said the Pima. "Nothing to do," said the Apache, and the other men mumbled similar expressions.

"And has it been worth it, today, that you came to class?" she asked.

"I don't know. I had most of this stuff at another workshop," said the Pima. The instructor gave no indication of the embarrassment or anger that I was feeling for her. She continued to work through the decision-making interpretation. Now students seem to be tiring. One put his head on the table, momentarily resting; one read his newspaper.

Maybe the instructor was tired, too; the lecture drifted into unrelated topics. Then she began to talk about happenings on the reservation, and the whole class became alert. People sat up straighter in their chairs, and all eyes were focused on the instructor. Then she began writing on the board, asking the participants what things were constraining them from making progress in their job search.

Responses, which she wrote on the board, included: "no car," "pressures from relatives to move out," "being unable to contribute to my relatives giving me shelter," "no finances," and the discussion moved on to ways of meeting these constraints. I considered that maybe they were paying relatives the $2.50 per hour that JTPA funds paid these participants for being here. "If you're being forced to be here, you shouldn't be here; it should be your own choice to be here," she emphasized.

There was some discussion about the option of returning to the reservation, though "nothing" was available

to them there. The Apache had no opportunity at home because his family were tribal leaders and no favoritism was allowed; the elderly Navajo man had health problems that prevented his returning to the reservation. None of the men wanted to return to the reservation, regardless of what they would find in the city; but all of the women indicated they would return, if nothing opened up to them in the city.

On another morning, the topic was "Budgeting Process for Job Search," and Liz listed all main expenses by day and week for meeting job-search activities. She gave tips on saving money: "use the phone in my office while you're here, to call employers," "cultivate friendships with your neighbors, who may turn into an unexpected resource for you--from sharing fresh-baked cookies, to leads into jobs."

Liz diagramed on the board how to calculate your work record; showing how to emphasize the total time, and deemphasize the short-time record at each place of employment. Humorously, she lectured on developing acceptable job habits and "blowing your Indian image."

When she talked about making the most of any organizations to which one has belonged, and listing them on applications, several women participants expressed social orientations. The Pima woman told about her charter membership in Anytime, USA, an interracial organization promoting minority leadership skills, and a shy Navajo woman quietly asked if she should list that she had been in National

Honor Society in high school. When the Sioux woman who was working on her master's degree mumbled something about Freudian psychology, Liz turned her off with, "We don't deal with that in this class; it's not useful information." I was sorry I hadn't heard what the Sioux mentioned.

The instructor ended the morning session with a rather didactic lecture on the responsibility of individuals to take care of their own education and training needs. "You can't expect the government and the tribe to take care of you. We have to face the reality of the real world," she said in a harsher voice than usual for her. Her usual relaxed and graceful body was now immobile, her voice was shallow and tight-sounding, and her eyes looked aside, not at her audience. She said, "We Indians tend to lean on each other too much for our own good."

Perspectives from the Helpers

I began with the receptionist to find out just who interacts with the participants, and what steps are required in the processing. First, the participant answers questions asked on two forms: the application for JTPA services, and the eligibility document. Second, an intake person evaluates the eligibility of the applicant to enter the program and, if eligible, makes an appointment with a counselor for the first available opening. Third, the participant talks to the employment stability counselor, who

assesses the individual needs and refers the participant to one of the following: the two-week World of Work orientation program, an appointment with a job developer, or the COPE (Council on Problems in Employment) sessions. The counselor will continue to assist the participant for a year.

The receptionist said that fifteen to sixteen appointments with counselors are made each day, and usually at least twelve keep their appointments.

I selected six key helpers to interview: two counselors, one job developer, one job developer supervisor, one trainer, and one training supervisor. Four of these helpers were Native Americans and two were Anglos. In individual interviews, I tried to find out perspectives on ten questions (see Appendix). but I made an effort to keep the discussions free-flowing, to allow for any unbiased data to emerge.

Question: Who are these participants in your program?

Most of them have recently moved from a reservation to Phoenix. Over 50 percent of them are new to an urban area; they seek out Phoenix Indian Center when they get to town.

About 75 percent are from the reservation; people having trouble finding a job.

Many are displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, or those lacking a consistent work history. They are all ages. They are seeking help in employment search.

About 40 percent are Navajo. Ten percent have already been to several trade schools. About 60 percent are from a reservation. Most are high school graduates

and a few have been to college; but most are unable to read or write accurately.

They are people with family relationship problems, many with alcohol or drug abuse problems.

They are people needing full-time work or training: Indians needing training to learn to be competitive.

Question: How honest are the participants about themselves?

Eight out of ten are honest, and women participants are more honest with another woman--will talk about home relationships, which do influence their job stability. Women seem to have a dependency problem in many cases.

Some may lie, due to alcoholism problems, or no roots, but 85 percent are honest.

One out of four is not completely honest.

They lie a lot--95 percent are totally dishonest. They evade the truth to me, though they may be honest with another Indian.

I don't think they come here for a handout; they come to get help in finding a job.

Possibly three out of four are truly honest; they do relate more to someone with reservation backgrounds. Most really need help after losing a job; we try to evaluate and ask them, why are you back again?

Question: What are the most realistic needs of the Native American unemployed person?

Food, housing, and a job, in that order.

They need to develop verbal communication skills, survival writing skills, interview techniques, urban survival skills, planning strategies, understanding of the labor market, use of a telephone, and a vehicle.

Housing is the biggest need; there's no stability in addresses; they are new to the area and living with first one relative and then another. It is a problem to find them when a potential employer asks.

An identification of the real training needs of the participant. Job developers and case workers meet once a week to make decisions about individual client needs.

Most of all they need the resources we offer, as a networking place.

Question: How much do the participants' cultural mannerisms interfere with their job stability?

They do interfere; it's evident. It's mostly people from the reservation who are passive. It's a learning process to relate to both worlds. We help them to have options, to understand what the city expects and to know about the world of work.

The biggest cultural interference on the job has to do with communication problems. They lack experience relating to non-Indians; with making a transition to a mixed area. Eye contact is still a problem with a few--those older people and those traditionally reared. Verbal communication problems include not asking questions of supervisors on the job. Why? Maybe pride, lack of self-esteem, shyness, quietness. Some return from reservation visits a day or two late, and the supervisor says: if they had only told me before they left.

Culture doesn't really interfere. Only a few--maybe 20 percent--from the reservation, still avoid eye contact. A few do put family before job, but usually those who are responsible to their family, are also responsible to their job. The work ethic is in Indian culture, too.

Cultural ways interfere with the job for 75 percent of our participants. The public needs to understand Native Americans and their culture. The lack of knowledge of us is horrendous. Many of our people live in squalor--no running water; no indoor toilets --it's terrible. In Arizona, a more traditional state than others, people go home to the reservation whenever they can--to tend to gardens, go to ceremonies; probably 10 percent of the urban Indians are still going to leave a job to attend a ceremony. Indians can survive without the material things that a job provides.

Non-Indians don't understand that when an Indian keeps his eyes averted, it is a sign of respect.

Question: When will the high rate of unemployment among Native Americans change?

It will not happen soon. Indians need training of all kinds; especially training in how to be competitive.

When Anglos stop stereotyping Indians. The tremendous growth rate in Arizona, bringing more unemployed into the state, is one problem, con- founded by the prejudices of many of the newcomers. Here at Phoenix Indian Center we have offered workshops to help employers deal with stereotyping problems. But it comes from both sides: Indians need to see how they stereotype non-Indians, too.

Unemployment figures will change when reservations change, when tribes prepare their people for the urban setting: how to pay bills, handle money, how to survive in the city. A reservation person may be offered a good job, but when he gets here, he has no concept of where to go, how to read traffic lights. There need to be workshops on the reservations, teaching urban survival. Just simple things need to be taught: where to look for a place to live, how to adjust to time orientation--a time to get up, a time to eat, a time to go to work, etc. They need to learn how to not let people in a rush get to them.

Native American unemployment rate will change whenever the tribes develop a private sector on the reservation. It must start there. The idea of self-determination has to be developed, not just talked about.

Question: Is PIC's employment and training program really helping Native American Unemployed?

Native Americans seek out the Phoenix Indian Center; it's a place for Indians, and through the JTPA program we help them to career plan and to be trained. Follow-up studies after job placement show that after six months, 65 to 70 percent are still on the job. We have only about 10 percent return return for training.

Clients come to us for help in their employment search, for job referrals, for help with transportation. JTPA offers employment referrals, training, career

testing, job preparation, job leads, counseling and adjustment, support services (such as bus fare, minimum tools, and uniforms), resume writing, and copies, and even emergency rent money sometimes. We need expansion, though: a client workroom or "job club" arrangement.

People come here when they're having trouble finding a job. We offer a positive attitude; from the reception room, through all the interviews and training, up through job placement, and after. We call the employers to see how things are going, or why problems are happening. A lot of those coming here are traditional people: don't know how to dress, how to act, what to say. We reassure them, offer workshops, teach them how to sell themselves. We're a support system. We need to be offering skills training If there were a central place for the unemployed instead of the present way of chasing around; they have to go from here to the BIA, to the skills centers, back to here, etc. One central place would be a big improvement for these clients. Maybe a place like the facilities at the Phoenix Indian School, where we could even house families until they get established in an apartment of their own.

Clients come here because they need either full-time work or training. We can help them get vocational training, go to college, deal with the frustrations of leaving the reservation life for the city (competition values and other cultural shocks). We can teach them to listen and to make decisions. JTPA offers individual assessments, a two-week work orientation, assistance to gain employment, or training, from periods of two weeks to six months. Help from staff input, to adjust to the urban life.

An Employer's Views

The job development supervisor at Phoenix Indian Center mentioned several employers of their clients: Continental Bank, First Interstate Bank, Aetna Insurance, McDonnell-Douglas, and others. I called the minority recruiter whose telephone number was given to me. She seemed glad to talk to me:

> Our entry level pay is $4.30 an hour, higher than most. We have hired three out of fourteen referrals sent to us by Phoenix Indian Center. Why didn't we hire the others? Could have been many things--maybe there was no opening, or maybe they couldn't type forty words per minute. We look at their credit rating and their job history.

I asked about problems with Native American employees, and she answered me:

> When an employee goes home to the reservation and doesn't return until Tuesday. Maybe their car broke down, or there was a sick relative, but we're not set up to accept these excuses. We do offer five personal leave days each year. Also there are communication problems--with co-workers and with supervisors. Native American employees take more time learning to trust, and becoming confident of their work. Sometimes our supervisors don't understand these special needs. Also, the Native American employee doesn't want to attend employee parties, many times, and this causes guilt feelings about not going. We need to be more understanding about this.

Home Interview with a Participant

After finding no one at home at apartments of three participants with whom I had made appointments, I decided to try to find someone at home where no appointment had been made, using a list of names and addresses given me by one of the helpers at the Phoenix Indian Center.

Finally, at eleven o'clock on a Saturday morning, at an upstairs apartment of an older place near downtown Phoenix, Dorothy Begay sat down beside me on the living room couch. She had changed to an ASU athletic shirt and new jeans, from the bed clothes she had been wearing when answering her door. I was feeling a little guilty about her

two children, six- and nine-year-old daughters, who had to turn off the TV and leave the small living room, so their mother and I could talk. The girls had smiled at me, and seemed friendly.

Though the room was tiny, the typewriter was an old manual, and the TV was only a 12" portable, the room was conventionally decorated with stylish furnishings, and as spic and span as any home anywhere. Everything could have been purchased at a second-hand store, but there was a sense of pride in the choices: a glass-doored dining hutch displaying collector's plates and fancy old whiskey bottles, a brass plant stand with green plant, a bookcase with some books and a few pieces of Navajo art, new-looking throw rug over the carpet in front of the couch, pictures and wall hangings on the walls. Home was important, in spite of not being on the reservation.

Dorothy, a 31-year-old Navajo, had lived on the reservation all her life, until coming to Phoenix two years ago. She was petite, very slender, somber, rarely smiling, and never looked directly at me. She sat more toward the edge of the couch, about two feet from where I was sitting. A high school graduate, she had decided to "come out on my own" and brought her children to Phoenix, where her sister was in training ay the Maricopa Skill Center, supported by help from the Phoenix Indian Center.

After attending the two-week World of Work orientation class at the Phoenix Indian Center, Dorothy had been placed as a nursing assistant at a nursing home. She worked for four months of the six-month contract, being paid each week, through the WEP (Work Experience Program) by the Phoenix Indian Center administration. It was a 40-hour-a-week job, at $3.35 an hour.

After another worker at the nursing home had told her about medical assistant training at the Apollo Institute, Dorothy decided that was what she wanted. She couldn't understand why the Phoenix Indian Center wouldn't help her out with the training she asked for; they had helped her "sister with her training." Dorothy entered the Apollo Institute training program anyway, with federal educational financial aid administered by the Apollo Institute. She continued to work at the nursing home and go to school at the same time, but after a month the pace was too much for her, so she quit the job, breaking her contract with Phoenix Indian Center. Now she is a full-time student.

Her voice was very low, and her speech haltingly slow, like many Navajos from the reservation. Asked about the problems of living in the city, she mentioned paying the rent, the utilities, trying to find a job, and the confinement of the apartment.

"You have to stay inside all the time. On the reservation, you can walk everywhere; you are free," she said.

When she finishes her training she might return to the reservation, if there is a job at the clinic near her home. She would like her children to be near their grandparents, to learn their culture; but if they were to stay in Phoenix, she believes the children would get a better education.

I asked if she had found speaking and writing the English language to be a problem. She gave the World of Work orientation class at the Phoenix Indian Center a lot of credit for helping her to speak out more.

"Listen, you've come a long way since you first came to Phoenix," said her boyfriend, sitting in the living room, now. He had been helping the girls with breakfast in the kitchen. Healthy-looking, in neat Hawaiian print shorts and a T-shirt, he carried an air of much self-confidence, which irritated me when he first entered. I guess he was being protective of his friends (?) when he interrogated me with a barrage of questions, about what kind of paper I was writing, and who I was. I had already explained myself to Dorothy, but tried to give him as much reassurance as I could, and finally he left us alone to talk. Later, before I left, I found out he was a social worker with the Arizona Department of Corrections and was working on a master's

degree. I liked him but didn't like the way he seemed to be intimidating Dorothy.

Dorothy's voice was so soft, I had to ask her to repeat several times. When her boyfriend entered the room (frequently) her voice would drop another degree and she would become very still. I felt she was expecting him to take over the conversation, which he did several times. When I left, he readily held out his hand to shake mine, in a warm manner, smiling and looking into my eyes. I took Dorothy's hand, as she barely glanced up at me, a slight smile on her face, and I gently squeezed her cold, lifeless small hand.

"Give it a little more," I suggested, as I held her hand.

"That's what they told me at World of Work class," she said with a smile.

CONCEPTS

The Work Ethic

People on reservations get up before dawn and work until after dark, according to many personal stories I have heard as a counselor at Mesa Community College. Work, identity, family, and respect are as important to Native American traditional people as to any other group. The big conflict is being caused because the Native American does not put acquisition of material goods as the top priority that motivates much of the general population in American society. Competition becomes sharp, with people seeking more goods and/or property, and this is a totally alien concept to a people more concerned for being respectful than to argue and fight. Today's unemployed people (7 percent nationwide) are competing for jobs, and those with jobs are competing to hold their jobs. Unemployed Native Americans (49 percent nationwide) stand little chance of becoming employed unless drastic changes are made.

At the Phoenix Indian Center, counselors, job developers, and supervisors told of how Native Americans lost jobs by not returning to work on Mondays after a trip to the reservation over the weekend. When the non-Indian employee, sometimes with a hangover, rushes to work on Monday morning,

is it because he is a more loyal, concerned worker, or is it because he wants to pay for his new car? A Native American worker, even returning to work occasionally on Tuesday, may be the most loyal, and would certainly be more renewed, after a visit to his reservation home.

The Native American counselor at Phoenix Indian Center said, "Indians need training of many kinds, especially how to be competitive. They need encouragement to adjust to a different life-style. They need assertiveness training." As he said it there was a sad look about his eyes and never a smile about his lips. "They have to understand what the city expects, and know about the world of work. It's a learning process, to relate to both worlds. I've been in the city for years, and yet I need to go home to regenerate my battery sometimes."

I wonder if this man is happy with his life. I didn't perceive any particular peace from him on this day. Does he really believe what he is saying about being able to deal with both worlds? I believe there is a loss somewhere along the line. Taking on one world means letting go of another one--even through it does sound brave to try to walk in two pathways.

Quiet Versus Aggressive

During the World of Work session on personality assessment, the instructor asked, "How do people see you?"

and three answers were generated: courageous, quiet, respectful. But to get jobs, do people need to be the opposite: cautious, aggressive, and disrespectful (or self-centered)?

I feel a great deal of anger about the idea of changing people from being courageous, quiet, and respectful. These are characteristics I most admire in people. A Pima man had named "courageous," an Apache man had named "quiet," and a Navajo man had named "respectful," and I find myself with warm, and even loving, feelings toward these men. I admire them, even though I remember they are the ones who told the instructor they were in class because there was nothing else to do. I believe they were being honest, and that just confounds the tragedy; a job to go to would be so much better. There must be a better way to get employment for people, rather than to take away such characteristics as courage, quietness, respect. Must the workers do all the changing? Why not the employers? Somewhere there must be companies that value workers who are courageous, quiet, and respectful, over those who are cautious, aggressive, and disrespectful.[8]

Native American Authority

Native American programs need to be administered, totally, by Native American people. When I asked the question about honesty of the participants, I received high

opinions among the Native American helpers, but low ("95 percent are totally dishonest") from the non-Indians. The Anglo helper even admitted, "At least to me they are dishonest; they may tell the truth to another Indian."

The other Anglo helper was very evasive and, perhaps, defensive. This helper stared at me, and adroitly turned our discussion around so we were talking about my degree program, etc., rather than the honesty of the participants. Did this person think I was after the helper's job? If the helper was being defensive--perhaps questioning an Anglo's abilities in an Indian center--the helper seemed wrong, at the time. Now, I question it myself, and I recommend that all non-Indian personnel be replaced as soon as possible with Native American personnel.

To further support my theory about Native American administration of these programs, I need only remember the students in Liz's class. Each time she made a point by telling about some situation or story with a reservation setting, the students became alive, attentive, and interested. It was like magic.

I believe the participants will be more revealing of their real needs to another Native American, so an accurate assessment can be prescribed for training and/or employment. I believe the participants will take more interest in the classroom training and learn more about the world of work

and how to live in a mixed society when the information is taught by another Native American.

The dilemma is that there are not enough educated Native Americans to fill all the offices where their special talents are needed. When Anglo helpers fill these positions, it would be natural to feel like a "second choice" person, and develop some resentments. The resentments would then diminish the effectiveness of the Anglo helper even more. Anglo helpers in such positions, working with Native Americans, need to have special orientations and support from, by, and for Native Americans. Much bicultural education and dialogue are needed to solve this problem.

Deviance and Reality

"Most Indians drink; they 'party' on a weekly basis," said one of the helpers I interviewed. "And there is a lot of use of marijuana and peyote. There are relationship problems: a woman has a child by one man and when the relationship ends, she moves in with another man, and so on," the non-Indian helper told me.

This is nothing new; many studies have shown the Native American to be socially discontent, and few changes have been made in the past two hundred years. For much of America, the Native American is accepted as a deviant and not as the equal citizen he wants to be.

"You have to face the reality of the real world; don't depend on others; take responsibility for yourself," stated the instructor, with a harsh voice to match her words.

"We have to train them to be competitive," said another helper.

This, then, is the real American world: competitive, highly organized, oriented to the paycheck. The question is, are there people who can train those unemployed 54 percent of Arizona Native Americans to be competitive, while retaining the "roots" of family and tribe? Or will the Native American remain a social deviant to the general American public as well as a malcontent with himself?

The World of Work program at the Phoenix Indian Center holds a key. That instructor should be training others to teach these workshops, not just in the cities, but on the reservations as well. Of course it would take more funding; and many Americans would rather ignore the problem than to put another burden on their paychecks.

"Those who are responsible to their family are also responsible on the job," the instructor told me, and I believe her.

ENDNOTES

[1]"As a child, I became ashamed of my dark-skinned Indian father. Since I was light-skinned like my mother and people didn't know I was Indian, I heard many prejudicial remarks about Indians. I have felt weak and cowardly about allowing people to hurt me this way, and in not admitting to my half-breed status. When I was in the fifth grade, the teacher announced to the class that the principal wanted "all Indian children to report to his office immediately." I suffered the worst anxiety of my life as I remained at my desk. I decided I could not admit to my classmates that I was an Indian (inferior human, as I thought then), so I would wait for the agony of Hell at a later time (Southern Baptist teachings about what happened to liars)."

[2]Studs Terkel, Working (New York: Avon Books, 1972).

[3]Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba, Naturalistic Inquiry (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1985).

[4]I had been introduced to the World of Work trainer (Liz) about four months earlier, but had not seen her again until I telephoned her requesting some visits to her class sessions. After we agreed on four mornings out of the two-week orientation workshop, I confirmed the dates by writing a letter to her. A few days before the first session, she called me to change the first two appointments, due to a change in her schedule. Luckily, I was able to shift my schedule around to accommodate this change.

Other ways I gained entry into this membership was to bring donuts or cinnamon rolls for the class coffee break, on each of the four days I attended; and I took Mesa Community College catalogs with listings of degrees and certificates possible (not as a recruiter, but as a pure contribution to people exploring career choices). I took the trainer to lunch on one day, and I took one of the participants to lunch on another day. I never felt that I was an intruder, but I knew I was identified as a researcher, and I wanted to be cooperative and accepted.

[5]At coffee break one morning, I talked to one of the participants, Betty Jimenez. A middle-aged Apache mother of two grown daughters with whom she lives, she appeared neat and clean in a somewhat worn cotton print dress. Her

casually waved, shoulder-length hair revealed a few gray hairs and framed a cheerful, friendly face.

"It must seem strange for a 40-year-old woman to be just now getting trained for a job," she said to me. I responded with the usual remarks with which I reassure older students in my job as a community college counselor: many people of all ages are going to school these days.

She related to me, with no effort on my part, that because her youngest daughter had turned eighteen and the Social Security money had ceased, she had to find some source of income. She said her daughters are happy to support her, but they are understanding about her trying to improve herself. They told her, "Mom, you go ahead and do something for yourself, whatever you want to do." She said she'd like to work in food service.

I asked how she found out about this program. "The A.A. counselor told me about it," she said, and then hurriedly explained that it was "many years ago" that she had received a DWI citation, and they had just now caught up with her, forcing her to attend sixteen A.A. meetings. She laughed about this apparent joke on herself, but said she was learning a lot from the meetings.

I wondered how long it had really been since she received the citation. Was she seeking my approval and didn't want to tell me that she had an alcoholism problem, or was it really "years ago"? She looked and acted quite healthy, both physically and mentally.

She told me that she takes the bus from her home to come here, and it takes fifty minutes, with only one transfer. It sounded like quite a hassle to me, though I didn't say as much. She seemed to consider it a short and easy ride.

Later, in the classroom, I noticed she was finished with a paper-and-pencil exercise and was reading a small book. Moving nearer, I saw that it was a small Bible.

[6]Apartments. Where a person lives tells a lot, and I also wanted more time with individual participants than had been allowed at the Phoenix Indian Center. Some of them had given me their phone numbers, and I phoned on a Monday for appointments for the following Saturday morning. The first apartment complex was old and huge--possibly three hundred apartments--and was on one of the busiest streets in Phoenix, northwest of the older downtown part of the city. After walking through a maze of buildings, I finally found the number and knocked long enough, but no one was there. It was a quiet Saturday morning, and I saw only a few tenants: three Blacks and one Hispanic.

The second apartment was really a tiny housekeeping unit in an old motel, with perhaps fifteen units in all, facing around an old dried-up swimming pool. At the front

door, I saw Frances's name among the four listed there. When a young woman answered the door, I looked in to see another woman halfway reclining on a made-up full-size bed, watching TV. The bed and the couch, on which the other woman sat, took up almost all the space in the room. Opposite the front door was the entry to the closet-sized kitchen, where a large overweight woman was sweeping the worn-out linoleum floor. A man peeked from the hallway, once. "Is Frances here?" I asked, and the women told me that she had gone to the reservation the day before and would be back on Monday. I wondered why she had not called me to break the appointment, as I had asked her specifically to do so if she found she could not meet me at the appointed time.

The next apartment was a "cold try" (no appointment made, just taken from a list given me by the training supervisor). It was another two-story modest complex, but newer than the other ones. After the door went unanswered, I asked the next-door neighbor if she knew the person I sought. She told me, "I don't think anyone lives there."

The next apartment turned out to be a two-story dilapidated concrete place with dry weeds and rubbage laying around. A chain link fence with padlocks surrounded this dead-looking place. The next-door neighbor told me that no one had lived there since February.

Frances. She didn't say much in the class session, but we exchanged a few words during the coffee break, and during the second morning I asked her to have lunch with me. A Navajo, she used broken English and barely moved her lips as she talked, which made it necessary several times to ask her to repeat her words. She was slightly built, dressed plainly in skirt and blouse; I find it difficult to remember anything about her face, because she never looked at me when we talked. Because of time constraints, we went to the "greasy spoon" around the corner. With her twelve-year-old daughter, she moved to Phoenix recently and lives with relatives in an apartment, she told me. She wants to get a job so she can give her children a good home. The other three younger children are staying with their father, on the reservation. She talked easily with me, and I guessed she saw me as a "counselor," though several times I felt more like a friend (as when she wrapped both hands around my one extended hand as we said goodbye, afterwards). She told me that her husband had treated her so badly during their marriage that it affected her mind. She said she kept all these things inside her and never told anyone, and it made her ill. I asked if she had been receiving any help with this problem since coming to Phoenix, and she said she had not, so I recommended a psychiatrist I know at the Indian hospital. During our entire meal, I never once looked into

her eyes; she looked aside as she talked, or down at the table.

[7]Anonymity. I have chosen to change the names of all people mentioned or quoted in this paper. I wanted to be as accurate as possible in the descriptions and the quotes but, not wishing to cause problems to anyone, myself included, I have not used any real names.

[8]My own feelings as I conducted this study went through considerable trauma. One day, as I was composing my notes I broke down, sobbing, with a few screams, for a period of about ten minutes. The dilemma of the Native American unemployed populace is a tragedy, and the inhumane lack of interest by the rest of American society is pathological. For my own sanity, I realize my limitations. I will keep my work with Native Americans focused in the area of education, where I feel some competence, and leave the social-psychological-political problems to someone stronger.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Altheide, David L. Arizona State University, Qualitative Methods (CRJ 521). Class notes, Spring 1986.

Douglas, Jack D. Investigative Social Research. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1976.

Hammersley, Martyn, and Atkinson, Paul. Ethnography: Principles in Practice New York: Tavistock Publications, 1983.

Lincoln, Yvonna S., and Guba, Egon G. Naturalistic Inquiry. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1985.

McIntosh, Billie Jane. "Special Needs of American Indian College Students." Research paper, Arizona State University, Higher and Adult Education Department, 1985.

Shaffir, William B.; Stebbins, Robert A.; and Turowetz, Allen. Fieldwork Experience. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.

Terkel, Studs. Working. New York: Avon Books, 1972.

APPENDIX

INDIAN UNEMPLOYMENT

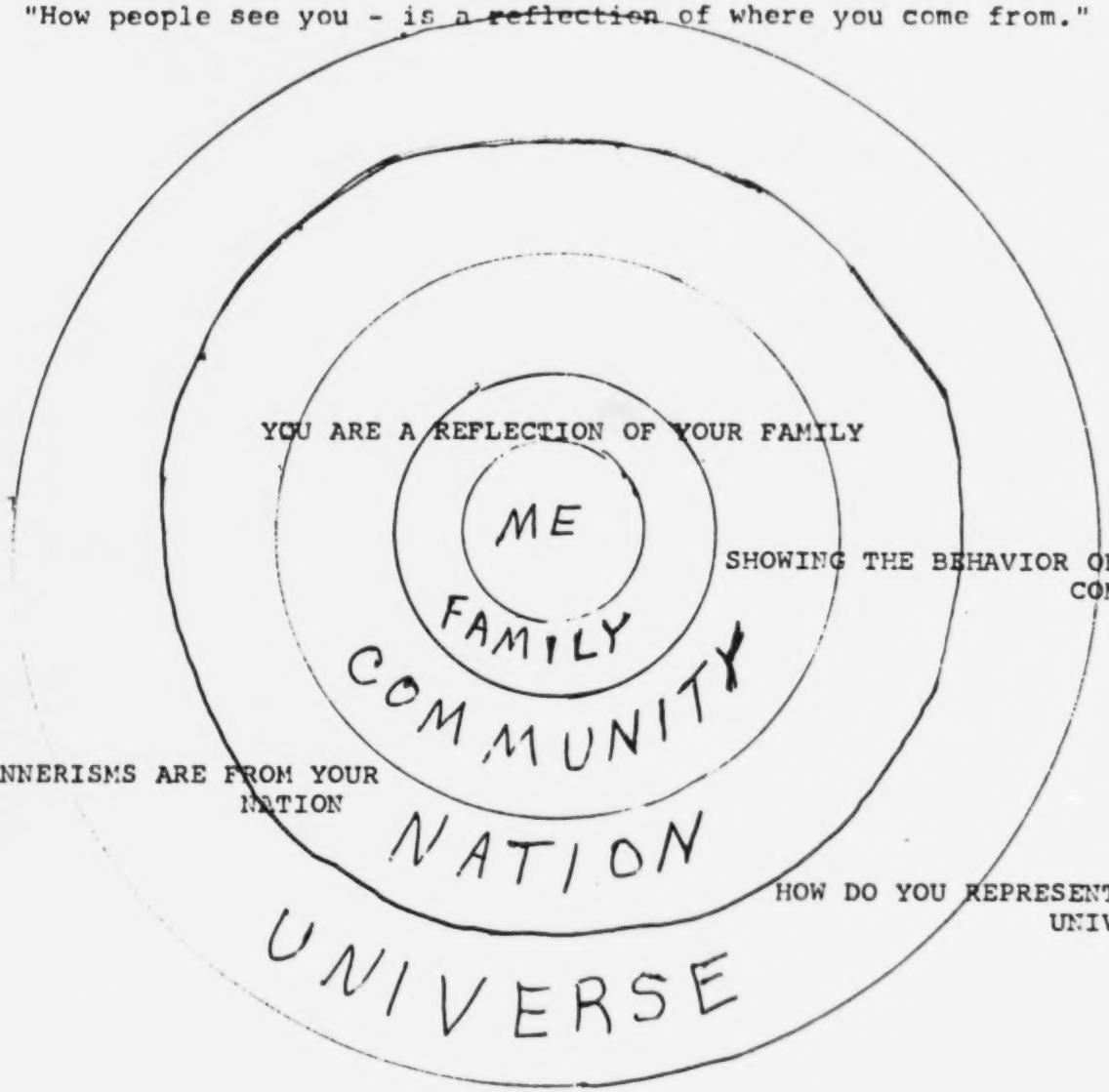
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

UNEMPLOYMENT
(Percentages
in four populations)

Source: Newsletter from Congressman John McCain, 1st District
Arizona

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT

"How people see you - is a ~~reflection~~ of where you come from."

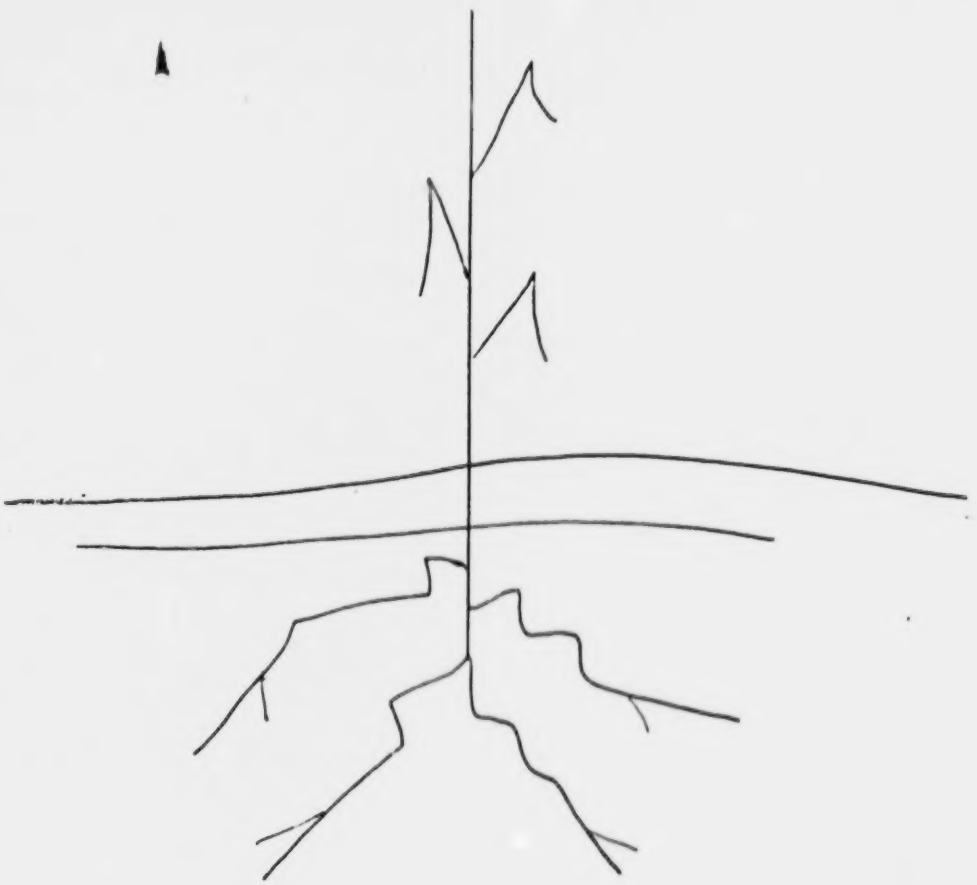


CHALKBOARD ILLUSTRATION USED IN "WORLD OF WORK" LECTURE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CORN STALK WITH DEEP ROOTS -

"-- like people with deep roots, they cannot be blown away by a strong wind."



World of Work lectures are stimulated with illustrations which reflect life on the reservations.

Literacy Scores for American Indian Adults (Nation Wide)

1982 report, by Rodney Brod and John McQuiston

National norm, on the 3 Rs = 85%
Indian norm, on the 3 Rs = 52%

"American Indians cannot be taken seriously in competing for jobs, understanding contemporary life, . . . availing themselves of legal remedies."

English language deficiency

This is a major barrier to educational competency, according to a needs assessment conducted with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 1981. They found that only about half of adult Indians spoke English as children at home, although all were educated in English. Now, as adults, 25 percent still do not speak English, and most have difficulty with it.

One-fifth of adult Indians have been enrolled in ABE, GED, or SEA programs; 35 percent of these programs were operated by Indian groups or community agencies, 25 percent by elementary schools or high schools, 15 percent by private vocational schools, and 14 percent by community colleges or universities.

For details, see Billie Jane McIntosh, "Special Needs of American Indian College Students" (Research paper, Arizona State University, Higher and Adult Education Department, 1985).

"WORLD of WORK"

"Urban Survival Strategies"

March 17 - 21, 1986

Monday, March 17, 1986

1:00 - 4:00 PM "INTRODUCTION"

I. Sign-in
II. Introduction of classmates
III. Employer Expectations (Discussion)
IV. FILM: "Learning the Ropes"

Tuesday, March 18, 1986

8:30 - 9:30 "Careers - Discussion"

9:30 - 10:30 "How to use the Bus System , Helen Keating"

10:30 - 11:30 "Fair Housing, Donna Gahagans"

1:00 - 3:00 "Stress Management, Dr. Orville McKinley"

Wednesday, March 19, 1986

8:30 - 12:00 "Personality Assessment"
I. Personality Types
II. How to work with others
III. Work Opinion Poll

1:00 - 4:00 "Job Search Strategies"
I. Traditional/Non-Traditional Job Search Approaches
II. How to read the want ads
III. L.M.I.

Thursday, March 20, 1986

8:30 - 12:00 Decision Making
I. Setting up a strategy
II. Follow-up
III. Evaluation

1:00 - 4:00 "Cold Calling"
I. Setting up a strategy
II. Follow-up
III. Evaluation

Friday, March 21, 1986

1:00 - 4:00 Talking Circle
Presentor: Avis Stephens

List of Questions Used in Helper Interviews

1. What brings the participant to the Employment Service program?
2. What does JTPA offer people?
3. What component of the Employment Service at PIC is the most useful to the participants?
4. Which component is the most unnecessary?
5. How honest are the participants about seeking work, or about telling about themselves?
6. How honest (or realistic) are the PIC staff members about job placement for the participants? To themselves? To the participants?
7. What are the most realistic needs of the Indian unemployed?
8. How much do mannerisms reflecting cultural mores (silence, averted eye contact, passivity, family priorities) interfere with job stability?
9. When is the Native American unemployment rate going to change?
10. As federal programs go, does JTPA utilize the tax dollar effectively?

Tribes Represented in World of Work Workshops

Navajo	40-60%
Pima	10-30%
Apache	10%
Papago	10%
Hopi	10%
Sioux (and other tribes from outside Arizona)	10%
Other Arizona tribes	Not more than 10%

Training Programs at Phoenix Indian Center

CRT (Class Room Training). Beginning with World of Work, extends into cooperative job sites, such as DES and IHS. Pay: $2.50 per hour; checks distributed at the Phoenix Indian Center, according to time sheet, up to 20 hours per week. Those lacking in skills and communication may be supervised from six months to one year on this program.

WEP (Work Experience Program). Full-time work at cooperating agencies such as DES, IHS, TERO, and PIC. Pay: $3.50 per hour, 40 hours per week, for six-month contracts. For those with minimum skills and ability to communicate.

OJT (On the Job Training). Available for six months' duration. Pay: $4.00 per hour, paid one-half by JTPA funds and one-half by the cooperating agency or industry.

Other training administered through this unit includes:

GED (high school equivalency diploma).

ABE (adult basic skills: reading, writing, etc.).

Job Search (World of Work orientation).